

The Red Door School



Assessment and Recording Policy

Approved by Board of Management: 23rd March 2021

Next Review date: March 2023

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)



Assessment & Recording Policy

Introduction

This policy was originally drafted by the Principal and Clinical Supervisor in consultation with Special Class Teachers. The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on **23rd March 2021**.

Policy Rationale

The core of the policy is that all children should experience success at school. This policy endeavours to identify at the earliest possible opportunity, children who may have additional educational, emotional or behavioural difficulties and put in place a whole school response to their needs. An effective assessment policy is central to this core objective.

This policy document should be read in conjunction with our 'School Continuum of Support' Policy document. Further detail in relation to Individual Education Plans and the stages each year where Assessment occurs are outlined in the school IEP Policy.

Relationship to School Ethos

The ethos of The Red Door School is to provide child-centred education through evidence based individualised programmes for each pupil. Underpinning all aspects of school life is the pupil's right to learn in a happy, positive and respectful environment, to be happy and to be an active participant in their own education. An effective Assessment Policy identifies early interventions that need to be put in place to ensure that relative success, increased confidence and raised self esteem is achieved. Effective data collection is a central aspect to the successful implementation of this policy.

Aims and Objectives

The primary aims / objectives of the policy are to:

- facilitate improved pupil learning
- create a procedure for monitoring achievement
- track learning processes which assist the long and short term planning of teachers
- coordinate assessment procedures on a whole school basis involving parents and pupils in managing strengths and weaknesses.
- Assess and manage barriers to learning from a behavioural/emotional perspective
- Provide clarity around data collection and record keeping processes at The Red Door School.

Principles

1. Careful thought is given to the purpose of assessment, adopting a wide range of methods to reflect the whole curriculum and learning opportunities. The main purpose of assessment must be to facilitate progress in a pupil's learning.
2. Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process, a valuable formative tool.



3. The range of opportunities for carrying out continuous assessment is increased by good classroom organization.
4. The outcomes of assessment modify our teaching methods, provide feedback on the Curriculum as well as indicate pupil progress.
5. We recognize the potential for assessment in developing a positive self-image in the pupil from positive and constructive feedback and the feeling of success.
6. In addition to normal assessment, opportunities are taken to record significant points in a child's development, such as:
 - a moment of 'breakthrough' in understanding
 - surprises and unusual reactions
 - interesting examples of strategies for learning.
 - difficulties encountered and possible reasons for them.
7. Results of assessment are reported in a way useful for pupils, teachers, parents and other interested parties.
8. Assessment of behaviour and performance gradually builds up into a profile of information for each pupil over their school career.
9. Assessment records must be easy to interpret, useful, manageable and should not be administratively burdensome.
10. *Emphasis should be placed on well written targets - Targets should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timebound (using the SMART acronym). It is essential that targets are written in such a way that they can be effectively evaluated.*

Policy Content

This policy is geared towards using assessment to inform planning and identify the needs of all pupils so that adequate strategies are in place early enough to facilitate remediation. These strategies may include pupil self assessment, pupil profiling, two way communication between parents and teachers, modification of teacher programmes, and Individual Education Plans.

Assessment Strategies at The Red Door School.

A variety of assessment methods are utilised at The Red Door School. Using information gathered from a variety of assessment methods, over a period of time, can help the teacher to create a detailed picture of a child's progress and achievement. This is particularly relevant in the case of younger children and children with Special Education Needs as their learning can be highly contextualised, resulting in less reliable assessment information (including from test scores). Knowledge of the context in which the assessment takes place enriches the teacher's interpretation of the information gathered. This makes it easier for him/her to understand the learning process from the child's perspective.

Methods of assessment used to gather information on children must not in any way discriminate against them. Teachers need to be aware of the effects of context, culture and language on assessment and seek to ensure that assessments are carried out in circumstances that are appropriate for children. For example, teachers need to identify and address aspects of assessment that are particularly relevant to children with special educational needs, and provide appropriate alternatives as required. In the case of



some children, the teacher may have to explore ways of recognising progress and achievement that are sufficiently sensitive to each child’s level of ability. This might involve placing a greater value on how the child experiences and responds to an activity, or providing the child with additional time to complete an activity.

Assessment of learning	
<i>The teacher’s purpose in assessment for learning is to use assessment information to plan learning experiences which meet the child’s learning needs</i>	
Informal Assessment	<p>The most common form of assessment used in our school are; teacher observation, teacher designed tests and checklists, projects and class work. These informal assessments are at the discretion of individual teachers. Records of teacher-designed tests are kept by the individual teachers and communicated to parents at the Parent-teacher meeting / end of year report. Each teacher has discretion as to the format, administration and frequency of in-class testing. The most common types of informal teacher designed testing in our school include; Checklists, task analysis, data collection sheets.</p> <p>reviewing a child’s portfolio of work for a year, making an overall judgement according to agreed and specified criteria.</p>
Formal Assessment	<p>Standardised tests As part of the process of assessment of learning a great majority of Irish primary schools use standardised tests to ascertain children’s attainment in literacy and numeracy. <i>All pupils in primary schools should be tested in literacy and numeracy at the end of first/beginning of second class and at the end of fourth/beginning of fifth class – this includes pupils in Special School’s where appropriate.</i> (see Appendix 1 for age ranges)</p> <p>A complete list of all standardised tests available within the school is outlined in Appendix 1, due to the variety of needs catered for within our school context the class teacher will select the most appropriate assessment formats for the child and may use a combination or portions of different tests to gain a comprehensive picture of the child’s need.</p> <p>The Class Teacher may choose the most appropriate point for the administration of the first test taking into account the circumstances and age of the pupil. Standard and Percentile Rankings scores are recorded on the child’s file and stored by each individual teacher in the students Assessment file.</p> <p>In line with DES guidelines all standardized test scores administered will be orally given to parents/guardians at Parent/Teacher meetings and a STEN score will be written in the end of year reports.</p> <p>Screening/Diagnostic tests In addition to the requirement for standardized testing, teachers will continue to use a variety of screening/diagnostic tests to provide them with the particular information needed about pupils. Similarly, if a teacher believes that a child’s test score is at odds</p>



	<p>with the results of other assessments or does not seem to reflect the child’s achievement the teacher should feel free to administer another test.</p> <p>The screening tests available to identify learning strengths and weaknesses in our school are –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfield Infant Assessment Programme • Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST) • Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT) • Aston Index • Sigma T (occasionally). • Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy – Screening • Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy - Screening <p>The diagnostic tests available in the school include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neale Analysis • Aston Index • Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy – Diagnostic • Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy - Diagnostic <p>See Appendix 1 for tests available at The Red Door School</p>
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<h2 style="text-align: center;">Assessment <i>for</i> learning</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Assessment of learning provides a record of the child’s progress and attainment, whether at class or school level, at the end of a given period of learning</i></p>	
<p>Informal Assessment</p>	<p>Teacher observation: By engaging in classroom observation and listening to children, the teacher can gather evidence of successes and difficulties with learning which children experience. During this process of supporting the child’s learning through assessment for learning, it may be useful for the teacher to record significant observations that can be referred to as an aide memoire when reviewing and discussing the child’s progress or when planning future learning experiences.</p> <p>Questioning and discussion</p> <p>Self-assessment: A crucial element of assessment for learning is the extent to which the child is actively involved in the assessment process. It is important that the child understands the purpose of his/her learning and assessment. At the end of a longer period of learning, samples of children’s work, portfolios, and projects can also be used to inform the teacher’s observation of the child. It is important that the child is involved</p> <p>Teacher designed tasks and checklists</p> <p>Parental Insight: Parents have an important contribution to make to assessment for learning. Their knowledge of their own children’s personalities, strengths, learning styles, home experience, and any difficulties they may be experiencing will help to inform the teacher’s own assessments. This will guide the teacher in developing a</p>



	more robust picture of each child's learning needs and in constructing learning experiences that best promote the child's development.
Formal Assessment	Standardised tests: The value of standardised tests lies not just in their potential to quantify a child's performance. They also provide information on the child's performance on individual test items. An item by item analysis of a child's performance on a standardised test can sometimes enable the teacher to identify areas of particular difficulty. Diagnostic tests: Like standardised tests, diagnostic tests can confirm conclusions drawn on the basis of the teacher's own informal assessments.

Recording

Information is passed on from teacher to teacher on a need to know basis. Each pupil has a file which is stored in the Assessment office with digital copies of IEP and Support Plans stored on pupils Aladdin Profile accessible only by Class Teacher, Clinical Supervisor and Principal.

In fulfilling the requirements of the Education Act (1998) schools create and maintain individual records of children's learning while they are attending school. They provide parents with assessment reports which contain accurate and clearly accessible information about their children's progress and achievement.

Three kinds of records are maintained by the school:

- the teacher's day-to-day records
- the Pupil File
- the Report Card.

Teacher's Records/Clinician Records

The teacher/Clinical Supervisor normally keeps his/her own day-to-day record of observations, remarks, incidents, etc. as they occur in the classroom and playground. This kind of record provides the teacher with additional information about the child, which helps him/her to meet the needs of individual children more effectively. It also informs the teacher's classroom organisation.

Pupil Support File

The Pupil Support File is used by teachers to record information on all aspects of the child's learning and development. The File provides a concise educational history of the child's progress and achievement during the course of each school year. One file per child should be maintained. It should be used to store documents filled in by the class teacher, the learning support teacher, and the resource teacher (where applicable).

The main functions of the Pupil File are to

- support both teachers and children in monitoring and structuring learning
- provide information for teachers when preparing reports for parents
- provide information for teachers who will have subsequent responsibility for the child's education.



The Pupil File takes account of the child's strengths and needs, the progress he/she has made, and any areas of learning and development that need particular attention. Other useful and pertinent information may also be stored in the Pupil File, such as home contact details, enrolment data, school attendance record, medical history (where appropriate), information concerning experiences at pre-school (if made available to the school on transfer), and the products of assessment (for example, completed standardised test booklets).

Assessment information can be recorded in different forms, including marks, grades, checklists, profiles, and narrative comments. (See Section 2.)

The assessment information contained in the Pupil File and on the Report Card should be readily accessible and comprehensible to all relevant interests. This will entail clarity and consistency in recording and reporting assessment information from teacher to teacher within the school and in reporting to parents at the different stages of their children's primary school education

Privacy and Sharing of Information relating to Assessment

Parents have a right to all assessment information about their children in intelligible form and they have the right to know the source of the assessment information, for example the class teacher or Clinical Supervisor.

The following designated persons are also entitled to direct access to individual, group or class assessment information:

- the child's class teacher
- the class teacher, within the same school, to whom the child is transferring
- the principal
- Clinical Supervisor
- the DES inspector
- the NEPS psychologist (with parental consent)
- the Education Welfare Board and its officers
- other relevant professionals (including a Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO))

Roles and Responsibilities

Stages of Support

Stage 1 – Class Support (for all)

Stage 2 – School Support (for some)

Stage 3 – School Support Plus (for a few)

**Further details on our schools approach to supporting pupils with needs are outlined in our 'Continuum of support strategy'*

It is the responsibility of the class teacher at all stages to implement staged interventions at class level.



At Stage 2, the responsibilities are shared with the Clinical Supervisor.

At Stage 3, The Clinical Supervisor under the oversight of the Principal assumes a direct role in liaising with Multi-Disciplinary Team and class teacher to identify support strategies for pupil

Parents have a role at all stages and the lines of communication must be always kept open.

Success Criteria

This policy is considered successful if –

- Early identification and intervention is achieved
- Clarity is achieved regarding procedures involved in staged approach
- Procedures are clear and roles and responsibilities are defined
- The Special Education Team have clearly defined roles and objectives
- There is efficient transfer of information between teachers

Ratification & Communication

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____.

Review Timetable

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Principal)



References

DES Circular 02/05 – 24/03

DES Learning Support Guidelines 2000
www.sess.ie

Working together to make a difference for children - NEPs

NCCA Assessment Guidelines for Schools <https://ncca.ie/media/1351/assessment-guidelines.pdf>

NCCA – Assessment Standardised Testing - <https://ncca.ie/media/1354/standardised-testing.pdf>

NEPS – Special Education Needs ‘A continuum of Support’ Guidelines for Teachers

NEPS – Special Education Needs ‘A continuum of Support’ Resources for Teachers

NEPS – Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties Guidelines for Teachers

NEPS – Student Support File Guidelines

<https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/Model-of-Service.html>



Appendix 1 – Index of School Assessments

This index provides Class Teachers with a breakdown of available school assessments, the skills targeted in addition to the age range to which the tests can be administered.

A full breakdown of all recommendations for Assessment (pg 180 NCCA – Assessment Guidelines for Schools)

Language – Early Years			
Test	Assessed Skills	Assessment Type	Suggested Age Range
Aston Index	Language, visual and auditory discrimination § Motor co-ordination § Written language § Reading § Spelling	screening and diagnosis of language difficulties	5yrs – 14yrs
Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)	The NNRIT tests assess aspects of language and thinking that are not necessarily represented in measures of pupil attainments, and help to pinpoint low achieving and slow reading pupils who may nevertheless have high underlying ability.	Standardised – Irish norms	NNRIT 1 – ages 6:2 to 8:10 NNRIT 2 – ages 7:2 to 9:10 NNRIT 3 – ages 8:2 to 11:10
VBMAPP	ABLRS-R and VB-MAPP are two communication assessment tools tailored specifically for children with language impairments and Autism	Skills tracking system and curriculum guide.	All learners
ABLRS-R: Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills Revised	Language, social interaction, self-help skills, academic skills and motor skills. Assesses 544 skills from 25 skill areas.	Skills tracking system and curriculum guide.	4 years +

Reading Literacy			
Test	Assessed Skills	Assessment Type	Suggested Age Range
Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)	Memory ♣ Learning styles ♣ Social and motor skills	Standardised/ diagnostic	4-7 years
Middle Infant Screening Test (MIST)	Listening comprehension ♣ Letter knowledge ♣ Phonological/ phonemic awareness ♣ Written vocabulary	Screening	5yrs – 6yrs



Drumcondra Test of Early Literacy – Screening test/Diagnostic Test	Group screener and a follow up individual diagnostic test: ♣ Screener: Word recognition Reading comprehension ♣ Diagnostic: Phonological awareness Phonological memory Letter knowledge and letter sounds	Screening/ diagnostic	End of Senior Infants - Beginning of First Class
Test2r	TEST2r is an early screening test for reading and writing, it is an individually administered test suitable for 5 and 6 year-old children (Senior Infants and 1st Class). The first part constitutes a rapid screener test, made up of five subtests (tasks) for use by the classroom teacher. The second part consists of a range of diagnostic subtests given by the Learning Support Teacher to clarify any literacy subskill needs	Screening	5yrs – 6yrs
Aston Index	Language, visual and auditory discrimination ♣ Motor co-ordination ♣ Written language ♣ Reading ♣ Spelling	Standardised	5yrs – 14yrs
Non Reading Intelligence Test (NRIT)	general ability to be assessed independently of reading. The NRIT tests assess aspects of language and thinking that are not necessarily represented in measures of pupil attainments, and help to pinpoint low achieving and slow reading pupils who may nevertheless have high underlying ability.	Standardised – Irish norms	NNRIT 1 – ages 6:2 to 8:10 NNRIT 2 – ages 7:2 to 9:10 NNRIT 3 – ages 8:2 to 11:10
Micra T	The principal purpose of the test is to provide Irish Primary school teachers with accurate information on the reading levels of pupils in their classes. In particular, the tests enable teachers to compare the reading performances of their pupils with reading standards nationally	Standardised – Irish Norms	Level 1 – First Class Level 2 – Second & Third Class Level 3 – Fourth Class Level 4 – Fifth & Sixth Class
Drumcondra Profiles	A Framework for. Assessing Oral Language, Reading, and Writing in Primary Schools	Standardised – Irish Norms	Jnr-6 th class
The Drumcondra Primary Spelling Test (DPST)	The DPST is a set of standardised spelling tests developed specifically for group administration in Irish primary schools. It measures three key spelling-related skills: Word spelling (pupils spell words called out by the teacher). Sentence or story completion (pupils write out the missing words in a text that is read aloud by the teacher).	Standardised – Irish Norms	1 st – 6 th classes



	<p>Error detection (pupils identify common spelling errors, and write the correct spellings). NOTE: Level 1 of the DPST does not include the error detection task. There are six Levels of the test, to correspond with First through Sixth class in primary school.</p>		
Neale Analysis of Reading	<p>A test of oral reading, based on a series of short narratives, providing summative measures and detailed diagnostic information.</p> <p>The <i>Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (NARA)</i> measures the accuracy, comprehension and rate of reading in pupils from the age of 6 to 12 years. It provides a comprehensive gauge of a pupil's interest in reading.</p>	Diagnostic	6-12 years

Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Skills

Test	Assessed Skills	Assessment Type	Suggested Age Range
Test2r	<p>TEST2r is an early screening test for reading and writing, it is an individually administered test suitable for 5 and 6 year-old children (Senior Infants and 1st Class). The first part constitutes a rapid screener test, made up of five subtests (tasks) for use by the classroom teacher. The second part consists of a range of diagnostic subtests given by the Learning Support Teacher to clarify any literacy subskill needs</p>	Screening	5yrs – 6yrs

Motor & Developmental Skills

Test	Assessed Skills	Assessment Type	Suggested Age Range
Belfield Infant Assessment Profile (BIAP)	Memory & Learning styles & Social and motor skills	Standardised	4-7 years
Aston Index	Language, visual and auditory discrimination & Motor co-ordination & Written language & Reading & Spelling	Standardised	5yrs – 14yrs
ABLLS-R: Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills Revised	Language, social interaction, self-help skills, academic skills and motor skills.	Skills tracking system and curriculum guide.	4 years +



	Assesses 544 skills from 25 skill areas.		
VBMAPP: Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Program	Assesses language and social skills based on verbal behaviour and developmental milestones.	Criterion referenced assessment tool, curriculum guide, skills tracking.	Junior and Senior infants

Numeracy Skills			
Test	Assessed Skills	Assessment Type	Suggested Age Range
Drumcondra Test of Early Numeracy	Group screener and a follow up individual diagnostic test: § Pre-number § Numeration § Addition and subtraction	Screener/diagnostic	End of Senior Infants - Beginning of First Class
Sigma T	<p>The SIGMA-T series of mathematics attainment tests has been specially developed and standardised for use in Irish primary schools. The five levels within the series are based on main strands of the Primary School Mathematics Curriculum and the content of the tests has been fully aligned with the mathematics programme.</p> <p>The tests are intended to provide teachers with accurate and reliable information on the mathematical achievement of pupils. This information can significantly assist teachers in monitoring pupil progress and in identifying pupils with learning difficulties in mathematics. The information gained from the test is also intended to help teachers in reporting to parents on the progress of individual pupils</p>	Standardised – Irish Norms	<p>Level 1 : Beginning of 1st Class – End of first term in 2nd Class</p> <p>Level 2 : Last term in 2nd Class – End of first term in 3rd Class</p> <p>Level 3 : Last term in 3rd Class – End of first term in 4th Class</p> <p>Level 4 : Last term in 4th Class – End of first term in 5th Class</p> <p>Level 5 : Last term in 5th Class – End of 6th Class</p>
Drumcondra Profiles - Maths	A Framework for. Assessing Maths Skills in Primary Schools	Standardised – Irish Norms	Jnr – 6 th class.

Behaviour/Functional Living Skills			
Test	Assessed Skills	Assessment Type	Suggested Age Range
ABLLS-R: Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills Revised	Language, social interaction, self-help skills, academic skills and motor skills. Assesses 544 skills from 25 skill areas.	Skills tracking system and curriculum guide.	4 years +
AFLS: Assessment of Functional Living Skills	Skill areas include: The Basic Living Skills Assessment, The Home Skills Assessment, The	Skills tracking system, and curriculum guide for the development of	2 years +



	Community Participation Assessment, The School Skills Assessment, The Independent Living Assessment, and the Vocational Skills Assessment Protocol.	essential skills for achieving independence.	
VBMAPP: Verbal Behaviour Milestones Assessment and Placement Program	Assesses language and social skills based on verbal behaviour and developmental milestones.	Criterion referenced assessment tool, curriculum guide, skills tracking.	Junior and Senior infants
Functional Behaviour Assessments	Assessment tools used to identify the function of behaviour and to inform the development of Positive behaviour support plans and skills teaching.	Includes direct and indirect methods of assessment (observation, data collection, interviews, and questionnaires) to assess the reason why a behaviour of concern is occurring.	All ages
IGLR	The Inventory of Good Learner Repertoires (Ward, 2008) is an assessment tool designed to measure the ease with which a student may be taught. The IGLR can be used to identify a student's preferred learning styles, their dependence upon various supports, the relative efficacy of various supports, their resilience upon encountering challenges, and their potential to learn in less-supportive environments. Popular supports, such as visual activity schedules, are assessed for their actual benefit to a particular learner	Skills Tracking system	All learners